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TRAINING PERSONNEL FOR CHILD WELFARE

The thesis of this symposium is that agencies and schools of social work must work together to solve the problem of staff shortage. The symposium will be continued in the next month's issue. Comments and discussion are invited.

1. THE PERSONNEL SHORTAGE IN CHILD WELFARE

Elizabeth Wisner

Dean, School of Social Work
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FOR some time the Tulane University School of Social Work has been concerned about additional personnel for the field of child welfare. Many agencies in the Southern states are seeking workers and we have very few to recommend to them. One local private agency reports an experience similar to that of many other agencies. The executive advertised in the *Journal of Social Casework* for a three-month period. A minimum of only one year of professional education was specified. She received three replies, one each from a schoolteacher and an occupational therapist; and the third applicant was a worker with considerable experience in the children's field but without a college degree or any professional training.

We all agree that adequate services to children in the Southern states are seriously jeopardized through the lack of professional personnel, and that the questions raised by the Child Welfare League of America are very timely. Before discussing what can be done to increase the number of child welfare workers, I believe it is pertinent to make a brief analysis of the obstacles which we in the School of Social Work, as well as in the agencies, face in trying to see that this field gets at least its fair share of the personnel now available.

Problems of Young Child Welfare Workers

I look back to the days when many more of our students would say that they wanted to prepare for positions in child welfare agencies than is true today. They did not necessarily know all of the ramifications of the field, but the idea of serving the needs of children had a natural appeal that the programs of other agencies seemed to lack. Then came the child welfare educational leave programs of the various state departments of public welfare, and a very sizable number of students were enrolled at Tulane, preparing for this field. Two additional field work centers were organized, and we began to assume that for the first time services to children, especially in

rural areas, were on their way. But the war came, and the loss in personnel to the war agencies was very great. As one state child welfare supervisor has said, the young supervisory group was wiped out during the years 1942-1944 and has never been fully replaced.

The shortages created by the war could, however, be repaired in time, if there were not other obstacles inherent in the current child welfare picture. We find that students on child welfare scholarships frequently express a fear that they will be assigned to rural counties where they will receive too little help in administrative procedures as well as in casework. They begin to see the lack of resources for the children for whom they will be responsible, and their feeling of insecurity is very real. In many of the state-wide child welfare programs, the workers think of themselves as isolated from professional contacts, working in casework situations which are very frustrating. We all know that we simply do not have the variety of resources needed for children in the Southern states. Moreover, we are repeatedly told that the number of disturbed children is very great. Inherent in any child welfare caseload is also, of course, the possibility that some children may have to be separated from their parents and the young caseworker often finds it very difficult to assume the responsibility involved in the separation process.

One of the reasons the student may be attracted to the clinical field is the knowledge that decisions involving human beings are shared by the members of the clinical team, and the caseworker as a member of the team does not have to assume as much responsibility for the outcome of the treatment plans as does the child welfare worker whose responsibilities are often very heavy. Another point frequently mentioned is the fact that the function of the child welfare worker is not always clearly defined, and that workers may feel confused as to the focus of their jobs.

Lack of Private Agency Scholarships

The private agencies, which more frequently serve the larger cities, have done less than the state agencies in the way of scholarship plans. For example, during the current academic year there are 13 students enrolled at Tulane on scholarships from public programs and only one from a private children's agency. Scholarships are not the only answer, as we know, for some of the state agencies have been unable to recruit a sufficient number of applicants. Here, the length of the commitment to the agency (if it is a two-year arrangement) is undoubtedly a factor, for students are very unwilling to "tie up their lives" for a three-year period: one year in which they attend a school of social work, and two in which they must agree to work for the agency. But scholarship opportunities are a factor, especially in this period of high tuition and living costs. Some private children's agencies which are chronically understaffed appear to have no consistent plans for educational leave or scholarship aid, although year in and year out they are seeking both caseworkers and supervisors. Undoubtedly inadequate funds and lack of understanding on the part of board members are factors which prevent long-range planning which might solve a part of their personnel problem.

Solution of the Shortage

The answer to the question of the personnel shortage in the child welfare field is obviously a complex rather than a simple one. More students and workers must be recruited, supervision must be strengthened if staffs are to be held, and long-range planning is essential. It is, however, apparent that the gap between the needs in the field and the available personnel cannot be closed for some time. The Progress Report on the Study of Social Work Education by Dr. Ernest J. Hollis, director of the study, which appeared in the January issue of the *Social Work Journal*, points up the personnel situation in social work and makes the interesting observation that the gap in our field between the number of openings and the number of qualified workers is greater than in medicine, dentistry, nursing or teaching.

What then can be done to increase the personnel resources for child welfare? I certainly have no easy solution, and can only repeat again suggestions which frequently have been made. From the standpoint of Tulane, the problem of increasing the field opportunities available to the school for the placement of students has been a perennial one. Through the co-operation of the state and local departments of public welfare, the supervision of students placed in

the Child Welfare Division of the New Orleans Department of Public Welfare has been assumed by the agency, whereas formerly a full-time member of the faculty, who carries both classroom and field work supervision, was responsible for the direct supervision of about half of the students assigned to that agency. This has meant that the school is now able to use its own faculty member in another child welfare setting. Several years ago the school and one of the local private agencies jointly recruited a qualified supervisor for the agency, with the understanding that part of her responsibility would be student supervision, with the school supplementing the agency salary, as a means of attracting a competent, professional person.

Last year, during the second semester, there were 16 students in child welfare agencies as against 20 currently placed in such settings. Such a comparison does not necessarily mean too much, as the field work picture is always in a state of flux, and certainly the number of students at Tulane who will be ready for employment in casework agencies at the end of the year will not equal the requests coming to the school for such professional personnel. The expansion of field work opportunities is, however, continuously on our agenda.

So far as the agencies are concerned, the question of how to offer salaries that will attract and hold competent workers is always a paramount one—at least in many Southern agencies. Salaries, as well as scholarship opportunities, should be increased, and continuous recruiting is essential. It is my impression that the other casework fields have more materials available of the kind that would be helpful in the recruitment of workers and in the interpretation of child welfare services to prospective students, workers and board members. I believe that through the use of such materials, through better publicity, and by continuous recruiting, more workers can be channeled into child welfare.

If we look back to the days before the passage of the Social Security Act and the inauguration of state-wide child welfare services, it is now apparent that we had little knowledge of the true extent of the child-care problems in the Southern states. The vast amount of neglect, the inadequacies in local resources, the antiquated policies and procedures of some agencies and institutions and the courts, are more clearly visible today than they were yesterday. Although the present personnel situation is discouraging to all those vitally concerned with services to children, the demand for professional staffs is in itself encouraging. It is an indication that more adequate resources are being developed, and that there is substantial progress in services to children in this area.

2. SCHOOL AND AGENCY

Donald V. Wilson

Dean, School of Applied Social Sciences
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THERE was once a man who had been an intelligent critic of the program of a welfare agency and, as a result, was appointed to a position of responsibility in the agency. Later, he was queried as to why in his new position he had not made changes to meet his former criticisms. He replied, "Things look different from the other side of the desk." So it is with some of the problems of school and agency relationships—many of the problems are the same for both, but the method for their solution depends on the point from which one looks at them. It is hoped, in this short statement, to note some common problems, and to show that their solution must be the concern of both the school and the agency.

Specialized Education

Frequently we feel "two ways" about our institutions, and find it necessary to resolve what appear to be contradictory attitudes. Higher education in the United States, and to some extent graduate social work education, are affected by contradictory attitudes. Because the practitioner in the agency must be concerned primarily with getting the job done without delay, it is natural for the agency viewpoint to be practical; agencies urge school personnel, as well as students, to specialize, and to select a course of study which will prepare for work in a particular setting. This practical influence is healthful, but must be expressed objectively with recognition of the dangers of formal education's becoming too specialized and too vocational in outlook. The same problem in various forms confronts all professions and all levels of education. Although specialized education perhaps better equips the student for the first job he secures, the potentialities for future growth, both of the individual and of the profession, become limited by it. The vitality of a profession depends upon its breadth, as well as its depth.

We do accept the premise that "terminal education" is more specialized, and that the last years of formal education can be more vocational in nature than previous years. When we begin to fashion educational programs, however, on the premise that formal education will terminate at the 12th, 14th, 16th or 18th year of schooling, we begin to narrow the basis for further sound education. We hope that the social worker's "education" will not end with the years of formal schooling, but that he will continue to

build on the firm and broad foundation of knowledge and understanding which he has acquired during his school years.

The practical viewpoint also includes at times a conflict regarding the democratic belief that one man is as good as another, which implies that an individual is to be evaluated on the basis of what he does rather than on his wealth, income, birth status, rank, or number of academic degrees. We are frequently skeptical about the practicality of extended education, but at the same time we have a basic respect for the number of years of schooling a person has received. This respect for schooling is indicated in most phases of our life by the symbolic value of a bachelor's degree; and in social work by the importance of the master's degree. In order to resolve this conflict, we have frequently tried to make education "practical," but such efforts frequently result in practicality's being emphasized to the point where education suffers. These seemingly opposing attitudes of respect and skepticism about higher education should not concern us unduly, but we must recognize their existence so that adjustments can be effected; so that we can work together better without increasing the frictions that cause needless delay and worry. One way to do this is to emphasize common problems and matters on which we agree, and to consider only secondarily the points of disagreement.

Problems Shared by Schools and Agencies

I would like to set forth three problems which face both agencies and schools, about which it seems obvious we must be mutually concerned. These problems are: (1) selection of personnel who enter the field of social work; (2) economic support of students while they are attending schools of social work; and (3) the nature of the field instruction a student receives while in school. These problems are interwoven, one with another, but we must try to sort them out as a step in getting them solved.

(1) Selection

All persons engaged in social work are involved in the problem of what persons will enter the field. Although the "recruitment" of students to enter schools of social work concerns both agency and

school, agency responsibility is frequently not emphasized sufficiently. Agencies have a definite need for recruitment programs to fill the jobs which are available; schools of social work have a similar problem of "recruitment," for although a school may receive many more applications than it can accept, it must secure the best candidates available. Schools must recruit for quality. Since the future of agency programs depends to some extent upon the quality of the persons entering schools of social work, agencies must be concerned with who applies for entrance to schools. The fact that many persons in schools of social work were previously in practice, indicates that it is often the influence of trained agency personnel that causes untrained staff to enter schools of social work. Frequently, also, agency personnel encourage persons without previous work experience to enter schools of social work.

Agencies sometimes complain that the graduates of schools do not have particular qualifications which are needed in the agency. It would be well for the agency to consider whether it is doing as much as possible to attract to the field those younger persons who seem to have the basic qualities needed in a social worker. The mere existence of agencies, what they do in the communities, the kind of personnel they employ, salaries paid and working conditions, determine to a large degree the quality of personnel attracted to the field of social work. There needs to be a co-operative, continuous, consciously effected program of recruitment of social workers for both the field and the schools, which must be supported by professional organizations, schools and agencies. It is not enough that such programs be carried on sporadically during a period of emergency such as a war or a depression.

In making decisions as to what persons are to enter the school, the recommendations submitted by the agency in the form of reference letters are important. Schools of social work must clearly establish and carry out their policies concerning admission to the schools, and these policies must be adequately presented to agencies, undergraduate professors and the public generally.

(2) Support of Students

It is a known fact, but one not sufficiently recognized, that students while in school must live; they require food, clothing and shelter which must be secured by expending money. Some students receive financial support from their parents or from other resources of their own, but frequently the qualified student does not possess sufficient resources

to enable him to keep body and soul functioning properly while in school. There may be value in sacrifice to secure an education, but the degree of hardship may be so great that the maximum value of the educational experience will not be secured.

Agencies, both public and private, have made in the past and are now making a contribution in providing economic support for students while they are in graduate schools of social work. We have abandoned the practice of apprenticeship, where the student supported himself by working in a social agency while going to school. Social agencies continue to have, however, a peculiar responsibility for schools of social work; schools were frequently established as a result of the interest of agency personnel in training programs affiliated with higher educational institutions. Agencies have recognized their responsibility for students by providing scholarships, educational leaves and grants-in-aid. The basis for establishing such plans needs to be more clearly understood. For example, many agencies require commitments that students will return to the agency to work for a specified number of years after a period of education. This commitment policy seems to be obligatory in some cases in order to justify the expenditure of funds, but the wisdom of such regulations is doubtful. Other agencies develop plans which pay students for time spent in field work; such plans, although expedient and apparently feasible, tend to confuse the purpose of field instruction as an educational method. Also, agencies, because they help to finance a student's education, sometimes influence the student, either directly or indirectly, to elect a particular field of study which prepares the student for a narrow specialization, rather than encouraging him to secure a broad preparation in the field of social work. Unfortunately, when schools point out the possible dangers in commitments, paid field work, and narrow specialization, it appears that the schools are unappreciative of the help and support which the agencies do provide.

The funds available to universities to help students are limited, and are not sufficient to aid all qualified students who need assistance. Both agencies and schools must realize that they are to some extent in competition with other professions for the best personnel available, and that in order to make it possible for desirable persons to enter a school of social work, some financial aid will be necessary. Students are expected to be interested enough to make some investment, but frequently the qualified person has nothing to invest other than his time and energy. Since salaries in social work are often low, it is difficult for the employed person to save sufficient funds to continue his education. Agencies

have in one way or another assisted students to continue in school. Agencies will have to do more in this area if their demands for trained personnel are to be met.

(3) Field Instruction

Although we continue to designate field practice as field "work," we have apparently come to the place in social work education where the field experience is not paid work, but is definitely a part of the educational process. Schools use field instruction because of a conviction that such a device is most effective as a teaching method. The success of field instruction as an educational method depends upon the understanding of the personnel in the agencies concerning the purpose of the field experience, and the willingness and ability of the agencies to provide the facilities which are necessary. Agencies must share the schools' conviction as to the value of field instruction. We must continue to seek to distinguish between field instruction, which is a part of formal education, and in-service training, which is a part of the work experience. Perhaps this distinction would become more real to us if school personnel would make more use of the terms "field instruction" or "field practice" rather than "field work." Agencies cannot regard formal graduate education as a substitute for sound in-service training programs.

Interdependence of School and Agency

The interdependence of school and agency is implicit in any discussion of the problems of student selection, financial support and field instruction. In graduate professional schools, it is necessary for the educator to give particular attention to the needs in the field, so that the students, upon completion of their studies, will be prepared to function effectively as employees in an agency. Schools of social work could not exist unless they did prepare persons who can make useful contributions in practice. Disagreements arise, however, because schools continually feel it necessary to resist the vocational pressure from the people in the field. This agency pressure tends to urge schools to train persons for a particular type of position, rather than providing a broad, basic education for the total field of social work. Agencies must recognize that the schools have a responsibility to provide students with a broad historical perspective and a wide horizon of theory. If students do not secure such knowledge and attitudes in school, they probably never will get it, for the demands of earning a living tend to force one, on the job, to give primary consideration to the vocation. The school, with the aid of the agency, should provide a broad educational foundation on which the individual employee and the agency subsequently build.

3. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND AGENCY

Lora Lee Pederson

Director, Nashville School of Social Work

FROM its inception in 1942, the Nashville School of Social Work has had a very real concern about children and their needs in the southeastern region, and a very real interest in child welfare programs to meet these needs. From the beginning, a large number of our students in this professional graduate school of social work have come from child welfare positions, or have entered child welfare positions on leaving school. While it is our objective to prepare social workers for the profession of social work, we believe an understanding of children and their needs is an essential part of professional preparation for all social workers. With this in mind, we have offered the following specific courses in child welfare in addition to the large number of our courses which have some bearing on child welfare: Child Welfare Casework, Foster Care of Children, Juvenile Delinquency, Services in Children's Institutions, and The Child and the State. Basic field experience in

child welfare has been available to students in the local office of the Tennessee Department of Public Welfare in the county in which Nashville is located, and in four adjoining rural counties at various times. Field work in some of the other general social agencies includes experience with children. In addition, the Children's Bureau of Nashville, which is a member of the Child Welfare League of America, the Visiting Teacher Division of the Nashville Public Schools, and the Peabody College Demonstration School offer specialized child welfare field experience.

Recruiting Child Welfare Students

It is believed the training of personnel for child welfare programs can be extended by an active *recruitment program* carried on by agencies and schools of social work. It is believed this recruitment program should begin in the child welfare agencies, where the staff members know the personal and pro-

fessional traits of character, attitudes, knowledge, and skill which they consider requisite for such service positions. Schools of social work find it possible to recruit for child welfare programs by visiting undergraduate colleges and by encouraging the interest of students in schools of social work in child welfare programs. One practical means of extending training programs in child welfare is that of offering scholarships to students who have a particular interest in child welfare, and of encouraging staff members to take educational leave with pay to complete professional training for social work. I would recommend that children's agencies and schools unite in a co-operative recruitment program on a local, state, and regional basis. One aspect of such a program could be a survey of needs, with the number of positions for child welfare workers in a certain area given some publicity. Another aspect could be a series of articles on child welfare pointed toward stimulating the interest of recruits for the profession who might not come into contact with the school.

Another means of extending the program of training of personnel relates to the financing of such training programs. It is believed that child welfare departments within state departments of public welfare should be encouraged to make more administrative funds available for educational leave, and should have representation at career conferences now held on college campuses on an annual basis. These departments could designate a member of the staff of the State Department of Public Welfare as recruitment person for child welfare positions. The Tennessee DPW has found such a plan to be successful.

Close co-operation with merit system offices in each state is one means of recruiting possible workers and extending training programs. It is recommended that private child-caring agencies introduce in their budgets an item for scholarships, including tuition and maintenance, and that they also maintain a budget item which will provide for in-service training institutes or workshops, to be offered annually or semiannually by leaders in the field of social work who are not members of the regular agency staff. In addition, it is recommended that personnel in children's agencies unite with other groups such as the Education Committee of the American Association of Social Workers, and with schools of social work when they are located in the vicinity of the agency, in keeping before the public the need for more child welfare personnel and for better education for the profession.

Improvement of Training Programs

In regard to the improvement of programs of training of personnel, a regular and consistent in-

service training program is recommended. In addition to stimulation through individual conferences, carefully planned staff meetings with participation on the part of each staff member is perhaps the most effective way of stimulating the interest of workers in improving their knowledge and translating the knowledge into action as they use professional skill in working with people. Institutes, workshops, and seminars related to the needs of children should be a carefully planned part of in-service training programs. This regular program should be implemented by a plan for each member of the agency staff to return to schools of social work to complete the work for the degree or for further advanced work. Consistent reading assignments in the literature of child welfare will initiate the staff in regular reading of professional periodicals and books. It is recommended that child welfare agencies keep libraries current, and have a sufficient number of periodicals and books for the entire staff to have access to these materials. When the agency is located near a school of social work, it is recommended that staff members be permitted to take courses on a part-time basis.

One of the most effective means of improving the program of training of personnel is found in the supervisory process. It is assumed the director of the agency will have a continuing responsibility for securing good supervisors and for increasing their skills in supervision. Attendance at local, state, and national conferences on welfare programs should be offered all members of the staff.

The salary factor has a relation to the extension and improvement of programs of training of personnel. Child welfare agencies should be cognizant of the fact that they are competing with other agencies, such as the Veterans Administration, whose salaries may be more appealing than those of the children's agencies. If children's agencies are to prepare workers for giving real help to children in need of various forms of care, they must intrigue the interest of prospective and employed workers by personnel plans which offer security and an opportunity to advance in the chosen profession. In the worker's mind, one real indication of recognition of worth is found in the salary factor.

One urgent need in this area is that of increasing the number of field placements through offering experience in working with children in family agencies and in children's agencies for students in schools of social work. Many of the students who make application to the Nashville School of Social Work specify an interest in field placements in children's agencies immediately upon making application to the school. We need to offer basic experience with children in a variety of social work settings, particu-

larly in rural areas, where the work tends to be undifferentiated. Child welfare agencies can assume responsibility for providing field work supervision for students. Directors of agencies and supervisors of students in such child-caring agencies attest the fact that staff members have keen interest in having students in the agency and that the benefits are mutual.

Co-operation of Schools and Agencies

The following recommendations are made as to effective ways in which schools and agencies can work together to extend and improve the program of training of personnel:

The schools would suggest that child welfare agencies give thought to their responsibility for providing more field work supervision, and in this manner carrying professional responsibility for education for social work. It is essential that more field opportunities be made available to prospective child welfare workers by family and child-caring agencies.

We are convinced that co-operative ventures which have been mentioned are already familiar patterns, but they are not carried out to the extent that would result in an increased number of well-prepared child welfare workers. It is recommended that agency directors visit schools of social work when possible, to interpret the needs of the field to the school; and that, in turn, school personnel visit child welfare agencies to learn firsthand of needs in particular agencies. It is recommended that schools of social work invite members of child-caring agencies to serve as members of school advisory committees, in order that there may be more planning together between school and agencies, and that there may be more interchange of ideas.

It is believed that basic courses and basic field experiences are essential for all child welfare workers. Agencies and schools alike are beginning to give thought to having more basic social work from the agencies' standpoint. We should work together to gear the student's school experience to the work experience he will have. By the same token, we need to gear the agency experience to the educational experience of the student, which would include an understanding of children and of special services for them in general casework courses and in basic field experience, with a counterpart found in a broad and basic experience for the worker in the field.

We need to give further study to the special features of child welfare work which would need to be covered in a reworking and enriching of separate child welfare courses. The current Study of Social Work Education, with its concurrent move in the field toward a merged or federated social work organization, gives hope of great advance in this area.

It is recommended that agencies and schools give further study to improving work study plans in order to interest more students in entering child welfare; and to give consideration to the possibility of work fellowships for child welfare workers. These programs should be carefully planned with some protective devices whereby the student may have a truly educational experience and not a period of apprenticeship. The work study program is operating quite successfully at the Nashville School of Social Work.

Agency directors and school personnel are aware of the dangers to the educational experience of the student if the program becomes a vacancy-filling device only, and agencies have been helpful in this regard.

To summarize, agency and school can extend and improve programs of training of personnel by frequent contacts and pooling of common problems and resources to meet these problems. The school can manifest an interest in in-service training programs. The agency can show its interest in school programs by offering consultation through advisory committees, by making available field placements in children's agencies, by furnishing field supervisors, and by making suggestions to the school regarding curriculum planning and other aspects of the school experience. Both groups need to recruit actively for child welfare positions and to locate undiscovered sources for potential child welfare workers; to find additional funds for financing the training of child welfare workers in the agency and in the school; and to improve the quality of training by encouraging the employment of well-qualified supervisors of child welfare workers and through attendance at institutes, workshops, and seminars related to the needs of children. A common purpose, a faith in joint and co-operative endeavor, and an ability to work toward the goals we have set for ourselves, will increase the number of child welfare workers available and will result in a deepening of the quality of services to children.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The National Conference of Social Work will be held in Cleveland, Ohio, June 12th to 18th. Mrs. Nelle Lane Gardner, Executive Secretary, Children's Service Bureau, Inc., Pittsburgh, Pa., is Program Chairman. Headquarters are at the Hollenden Hotel.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

The Eastern Regional Conference will be held April 7, 8 and 9, 1949, at the Ambassador Hotel, Atlantic City, New Jersey. The Chairman is Mr. Walter P. Townsend, General Secretary, Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania.

The Midwest Regional Conference will be held May 1 to 4, 1949, at the Hotel LaSalle, Chicago, Illinois. The Chairman is Mrs. Mary Lawrence, Executive Director, Jewish Children's Bureau of Chicago.

The New England Regional Conference will be held June 6 and 7, 1949, at the Wentworth-by-the-Sea, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The Chairman is Mrs. Jeanette H. Melton, General Secretary, New Hampshire Children's Aid Society.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

A Significant Change

THE answers to the League's 1948 questionnaire on board rates for children in foster family homes revealed a significant trend in the philosophy and practice of foster family care. In 1946 only about 10 per cent of the agencies had reported having no Base Board Rate. In 1948, almost half the agencies who answered reported that they had no Base Board Rate, but rather several rates based on certain classifications.

The Base Board Rate has been defined as the rate which the agency pays for its young school-age children who present no outstanding physical or emotional problems. This conception was natural in a setting where foster home care was offered as a substitute for the child's own family, when young school-age children constituted the largest group in foster home care, and when foster parents were asked to offer their homes and their affection to children toward whom there was little recognized public responsibility. This average school-age child was presumed to have no problem; the foster family was rewarded largely by the satisfaction of rearing such a child. Variations were warranted only for the exceptional children whose emotional disturbance manifested itself in overt behavior disorders, or whose physical condition demanded an unusual diet or a disproportionate amount of the foster parent's time and energy.

However, this very practice acknowledged that the foster parent's service would need to be remunerated when children's conditions made unusual demands on the foster parents (beyond the satisfaction which they gave), and that actual expenditures in money would have to be taken into account. Moreover, there was a tacit understanding that the foster mother, as a substitute parent offering long-time care, could ordinarily be expected to "clear up" the child's behavior or physical problems, and reap the advantages of peace from then on. In addition, a large percentage of the children had either no parents, parents with chronic illnesses requiring long-term hospitalization, or "disinterested" parents, so that in truth these foster parents could have satisfactions in rearing these children similar to the satisfactions of rearing their own.

The present foster care program is acknowledged to be different. Few children now have no parents. Improved medical service means fewer orphans, and fewer parents with chronic illnesses requiring long-term hospitalization. Casework services are available (or should be) to help disturbed parents resolve con-

licts which disable them as parents. Institutions are being recognized increasingly as special facilities, not for children of a given age, but for those suffering from a family situation or a personal problem which responds best to treatment in an institution for a limited period of time. No institution is now accepted as being adequate to meet the needs of infants. Foster family homes, therefore, serve children of every age presenting a variety of social, physical and emotional problems.

Consequently, foster home care is increasingly becoming, not an end in itself—a resource for rearing children—but a more temporary service (on an average, for a couple of years only), for children from homes in which certain illnesses, marital problems, or problems of child-parent relationship have made placement necessary while the cause is being treated. Not only are foster parents, generally, not giving longtime care, but, as one executive put it, "All our children are problem children," coming as they do from disorganized families. The foster parent has to deal with the child as well as with his troubled parents and, if she is to serve, she must be identified with the agency's goal of helping the child and his parents to become united whenever possible. Community responsibility for the well-being of children is now taken for granted. The community must therefore make foster care possible. It is not the responsibility of the foster parent to carry the burden of the cost of such a service.

Board Rates computed realistically would have to embody the variations found among the children served. Every agency would have to have, not a Base Rate, but "base rates" according to defined differentiations justified by the agency service to particular groups, and by the varying demands upon the foster mother. It is not good practice to set the Board Rate individual by individual for each child and each foster family. Variety of "base rates," rather than variety of "rates," is a concept needed to clarify the actual practice of many agencies in adapting Board Rates to the realities of different situations.

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THE DAY NURSERY

Alfreda Yeomans

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Not only the definition of the function of the day nursery and the responsibilities of the caseworker but the breakdown of the use of the caseworker's time and the statement of her qualifications should be a guide to day care agencies regardless of the setup.

In order to understand the caseworker's function in a day nursery and to define what her duties are, it may be helpful to outline some basic concepts with regard to day nursery work. First is the recognition that a day nursery provides a specialized community service which aims to strengthen and preserve family life. The daily care which it provides for a child is planned to supplement parents in meeting their child's basic needs: good physical care, the security of being wanted and loved, and a chance to grow and develop as an individual human being. The skills of the three professions of social work, education and health are equally important components of the nursery's work and must be so well integrated with each other that they become one highly specialized service.

The nature of the caseworker's responsibility, in selecting the families to be served and in helping them overcome their particular problems, involves her with concepts which relate to the fundamental objectives of the nursery. She must therefore work closely with the nursery executive and be in complete harmony with the policies of the nursery board. She needs to have intimate acquaintance with the nursery routine, with the work of teachers and health staff and with the other children under care. She also works in close cooperation with other members of the nursery staff to develop an understanding of the child's needs, through her interpretation of his past and present family relationships and his behavior. She participates in the nursery's effort to help parents grow in their understanding of the child's needs and in their ability to meet them.

Particular attention must be given by the caseworker to intake, to the child's development while under care and to the family's progress in meeting the problems which have made nursery care necessary. In addition, there is a great variety of emphasis in her contacts with clients, from brief, casual but meaningful conversations to longer, planned interviews. When problems arise which involve need for financial assistance, marriage counseling, a decision about foster care or a need for psychiatric guidance, the nursery caseworker should guide the family to the agency which is the proper source of help for them.

Function of the Day Nursery

Intake

- (a) The caseworker will be responsible for determining with the parents who apply for admission of their children whether nursery care is an appropriate resource for them to use. Certain steps will be involved:

1. The caseworker will review at least once a week* the list of inquiries about care which have been received by the receptionist. The latter will keep a list of these, including such identifying data as source of referral, parents' names and address, names and ages of children, and the reason why nursery care is sought. Parents will be advised by her that their inquiry will be referred to the caseworker's attention and that they will be notified when there is a vacancy in the particular age group suitable for their child.

When time permits, all parents who apply for care should be seen personally by the caseworker, since experience has shown that urgent needs for child care which the parent may not express may come to light in a casework interview. However, the volume of inquiries will probably not permit allotment of the caseworker's time for her to interview all these parents, so that it may be necessary for her to decide which parents should be given preference in making appointments for casework interviews, in the light of the family circumstances and the vacancies available for the children in the nursery. Routine notification will be made to all applicants of her decision to (1) give an immediate appointment for interview, (2) keep their name on file pending future vacancies, or (3) other disposition.

In addition, the caseworker will be available to handle situations in which the parents' inquiry is made under unusual emotional pressure.

2. The caseworker will receive the clearance with the Central Index of Social Agencies which has been made routinely by the receptionist prior to the appointment with the caseworker. An agency reporting a recent or significant contact may be consulted by the caseworker prior to her interview.
3. Personal interview is held with the parents at the nursery, during which the caseworker will endeavor to bring the problem underlying the request for care into focus. Unless the situation clearly indicates withdrawal or refusal, more than one interview is usually required. Both parents must be seen. The caseworker will interpret the nursery program as a "supplement" to the home, explaining the source of its support and the cost of care. She also will give the parent a description of group life activities and philosophy.

Parents will be advised what the nursery expects of them in sharing the cost of care through payment of a fee, in periodic interviews with the caseworker, and in attendance at parent-teacher meetings. The caseworker also will interpret the nursery's limitations, such as the hours which it is open and its inability to provide care when a child is ill.

- (b) The caseworker will be jointly responsible with the educational supervisor for deciding whether the child's needs can be met by the nursery at this time, in the light of the par-

* Since the caseworker's time will be limited, the Director will assume responsibility for this function.

ticular group of children under care and the teacher's capacity to help him.

Both must have the opportunity to meet the child and to observe his behavior. This may be completed during a first interview if the educational supervisor is available, or it may necessitate another interview. It is also desirable for the teacher to meet both parent and child before admission, at least briefly, and for parent and child to see the playroom in which the child will live during the day.

- (c) When it has been decided that the nursery plan is a sound one, the caseworker must complete the child's detailed health history and advise the parent about the required pre-admission health examination. She gives the parent the health form to be completed by the family's own physician.
- (d) The caseworker will make information about the family available to the teacher by recording the information she has secured, supplementing this by personal conference if it seems to be necessary, so that the teacher will be prepared to understand and handle the child's behavior wisely.
- (e) The gradual introduction of the child to the nursery routine is the next procedure in which the caseworker is needed.

In order to make this adjustment as easy as possible for both parent and child, certain steps are followed: When the physical examination has been completed, the parent and child visit the nursery. A plan is then made for the child to be present in his group for a short period during a morning session, usually about two hours. If his adjustment is satisfactory, the next day he is allowed to remain through the lunch period, the next day through nap, and so on. A minimum of three part-days' care generally is needed prior to regular full-time attendance. The caseworker should be present at the nursery on the first day, so that she will be available to help the parent with problems relating to her separation from the child.

Continuing Responsibility to Individual Parents

After a child is admitted to care, the caseworker has a continuing role with regard to the family problems which have brought the child into care. She is in a strategic position because she is an accepted part of the nursery program and has participated in the original plan for care. Parents will expect her to show interest in the progress of family affairs and in the child's adjustment to the nursery. In addition, her casual, frequent contacts with parents as they come to the nursery build up her relationship with them so that they turn to her when a crisis is reached. On her part, a deeper understanding of their needs grows from the opportunity for close observation of the parents themselves, as well as from the reflection of their problems in the child's behavior. The caseworker's continuing contacts with parents, therefore, might be classified as to several different areas of emphasis:

- (a) Casual, brief contacts serve both to strengthen the caseworker's relationship with parents and to increase her understanding of their needs.*
- (b) Planned interviews are initiated by the caseworker. (Most of these will be at the nursery, but there may be times when there is value in a home visit.)

- 1. An interview with each parent within two weeks of the child's admission. This will center mainly around the child's early adjustment to the nursery but will point up any steps the parent has taken to alleviate the family problem.
- 2. A subsequent regular interview with the parent at least every three months to discuss the child's progress under care, how the nursery supplements the routine at home, and how the family situation is progressing. Eventual discharge of the child from nursery care must be kept in mind as a goal toward which both family and nursery are moving.
- 3. Contacts with regard to special situations such as accidents, lack of cleanliness, unusual symptomatic behavior or irregular attendance not resulting directly from illness.

- (c) Planned interviews are requested by the parent, due to:

- 1. The parent's concern over his child's relationship with a teacher or another child.†
- 2. The parent's wish to report some change in the family situation, such as a change in work, income, place of residence, or a new problem which has arisen.‡
- 3. The parent's decision to take some major step with regard to the family problem. In this kind of situation the parent calls upon the caseworker whom he knows and accepts, but he would not seek help from another agency at this time. In situations where the problem falls within the function of another agency, such as need for financial assistance, marital counseling, foster care or psychiatric service, the caseworker should interpret referral to another agency. However, satisfactory interpretation may require several interviews.

Participation in the Integration of Casework with the Education and Health Aspects of the Nursery Program

- (a) This function requires regular conferences with the nursery teacher or teachers in each of the six groups at least every other week with certain objectives in mind:

The caseworker's understanding of the parent and child must be shared continuously with the nursery teacher, so that the latter will be able to understand and accept their behavior and to deal with it constructively. The caseworker, in turn, will receive further diagnostic material from the teacher's observations of child and parent and of their reactions to the nursery routine. The teacher's casual daily contacts with the parent are also a source of information about changed home conditions or impending crises.

- (b) Regular weekly conferences with the nurse bring the same values as in (a). The nurse's daily contact with all parents during her morning inspection provides an important source of information which the caseworker needs to share.

* These contacts may be limited in number, in view of the caseworker's time. The Director will be responsible for passing on her knowledge of families gained in the brief interviews which she may have with parents.

† The Director may assume responsibility for these interviews when the caseworker's time does not permit her to do so.

‡ When these interviews occur, they may be considered in lieu of the regular follow-up contact.

Participation in the Educational Aspects of Nursery Care

While much is accomplished through individual contacts with parents, there is additional value in parent-teacher meetings at which common problems relating to children are discussed. The caseworker participates both in planning and in attending such meetings, which probably will occur about four times a year.

The caseworker also will be expected to participate in the regular nursery staff meetings and to attend meetings of the Nursery Board. She will be responsible for interpretation of the needs of children and their families to the committee of the Board and for participation in the formation of casework policies. She also will take part in the work of local committees concerned with the social aspects of day care.

Division of Caseworker's Time

The caseworker will follow the pattern of weekly working hours which is in force for other nursery employees. In her case it will be necessary to distribute these hours according to the needs of her particular work, so that she will be available for interviews with working parents. The following suggested schedule would make this possible:

Monday	9:45 A.M. - 5:45 P.M. 6:45 P.M. - 8:45 P.M.
Tuesday	11:45 A.M. - 5:45 P.M.
Wednesday	9:45 A.M. - 5:45 P.M.
Thursday	9:45 A.M. - 5:45 P.M.
Friday	11:45 A.M. - 5:45 P.M.
Saturday	9:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.

This division of time would permit the 35 actual working hours each week to be divided as follows:

Casework contacts of 1 hour average length	19.1 hours
Office interviews with parents, home visits, and contacts with other agencies about families	
Conferences	6.9 hours
With Director	2 hours weekly
Administration	1 hour
Supervision	1 hour
With Teachers	3 one-hour conferences
With Nurse	1 hour
Committees	.9 hour
Monthly Board meeting, Nursery Committee of the Board, Day Care Section of Council of Social Agencies and American Association of Social Workers. Each meeting will come once a month, for 1 hour each	
General office work	9 hours
Recording	5 hours
Planning work or general clerical	4 hours
Total weekly	35 hours

In addition, the caseworker will be expected to give the extra time necessary for one evening staff meeting each month, lasting an hour and a half, and

for evening meetings with parent-teacher groups three or four times during the year.

The Caseworker's Responsibility

The caseworker's available time of 19 hours per week should allow her to make an average of 82.8 one-hour casework contacts per month. The present caseload would call for the following approximate number of casework contacts:

<i>Intake</i>	
16 new applications per month	16 hours
9 probable acceptances lead to an average of 3 follow-up interviews each	27 hours
(Including conference with Educational Supervisor and "introduction" of family to Nursery)	
<i>Continuing Responsibility to Parents</i> (Average 100 families)	
9 new families per month require interview after 2 weeks	9 hours
90 old families require 1 interview every 3 months	30 hours
Estimate of hours needed for casework	82
Hours available for casework	82.8

Guide for Admission (to Day Care)

by the Council of Social Agencies' Section on Day Care

The day nursery program today is a community service available to parents and children who are seeking outside help in preserving their family unity. Its primary concern is to select and care for those children whose family ties may be strengthened and who are ready and able to benefit from its service. As in the past, the day nursery will be asked to serve many mothers who work outside their own homes. However, primary emphasis is no longer placed on providing care for children in order to free women for industry, as was necessary during the war years.

Admission to the day nursery must therefore be based upon understanding of the total family situation, with prior consideration of all other community resources which are available or which may be preferable.

The following criteria are presented as a guide in this selection process as circumstances under which day care for a child may be a sound plan:

1. Absence of one parent from the home because of death, divorce, separation, desertion, extended hospitalization or institutional care.
 - (a) When the father is absent, the mother's employment may serve the best interests of child and family by relieving tensions or preserving a sense of self-support.
 - (b) When the mother is absent, day nursery care for his children may enable a father to preserve his family unit, preventing the necessity for foster care.
2. Parent's inability to assume his or her parental role because of physical or mental handicap.
 - (a) When a father is ill or is otherwise unable to provide regular support, the mother's employment may serve to relieve family tensions and preserve the family's feeling of independence and self-support.
 - (b) When a mother is handicapped, day care of her child may adequately supplement her maternal role.

3. The individual child's special need for care away from home during a portion of the day.
 - (a) The child may need supervised group experience because of problems arising within his own personality, as evidenced by symptomatic behavior difficulties.
 - (b) The child may lack the companionship of other children of his own age, which is an essential aid to his development, because he is an only child with no available playmates.
 - (c) Overcrowded housing or a small apartment with inadequate play space may cause tensions in the child which a period of day care can alleviate.
4. Use of the day nursery as an observation placement while intensive casework plans are being developed.
 - (a) A child's welfare may be protected by day nursery care in lieu of foster care, while such problems as acute marital discord between the parents are being treated or while a parent is receiving psychiatric care.
 - (b) A period of observation of a child may provide opportunity to complete a diagnostic picture of the child and his needs in relation to other members of the family.

Personnel Policies

Personal Qualifications

The caseworker in the day nursery should be at least 25 years of age. She must be stable as well as unusually skilled in her field, since she works in a setting where her co-workers are trained in other professions and where her thinking must constantly be related to that of teachers, nurse and pediatrician. Flexibility in her approach to contacts with clients, and ability to use each one as a step in her casework, are most important. An abundance of diagnostic

material is available to her from frequent observation of parents and child together, as well as from the child's behavior while he is under care each day. Since the volume of work suggested by this material can readily grow into more than the caseworker can handle, she must apportion her time carefully.

Training and Experience

1. A bachelor's degree from an approved college.
2. Full professional training in an accredited school of social work leading to a master's degree in social work.
3. Four years of paid experience in a social casework agency of good standards, in which there has been work with parents, children and their related needs. Special consideration may be given to previous experience, but in no case will less than two years of experience be acceptable.

Salary

In order to procure a worker with the qualifications outlined, a beginning salary between \$3,000 and \$3,360, depending on the worker's experience, will be needed. Annual increments should be expected until the salary reaches a maximum which will be dependent on current salaries in the field. The caseworker should receive four weeks' vacation with pay for a full year of service and be entitled to ten working days' sick leave with pay during a year's employment. Employment shall be for the minimum period of a year, with an evaluation at the end of each six months.

A BOARD MEMBER SPEAKS ON

*Interpretation of Child Welfare Services**

IN discussing any aspect of the welfare of children, one is apt to be drawn toward the sentimental. Children are so close to most of us, so integral a part of our lives, our hopes and our planning, that any neglect of them is anathema. . . . I hope here to set forth a few ideas which I have and which, it seems to me, are necessary, especially for us here in the South.

It is such a trite truism to say that the children of today are the citizens of tomorrow that I hesitate to use the phrase. Yet it is a true one. I have found myself thinking of it in the years since the war, especially when visiting some foreign country. I recall seeing in two successive winters the children of Germany, of Austria, of Italy and France and wondering what in God's name was going into their heads. Our chil-

dren. . . . must deal with the children of Europe 20 and 40 years from now. . . .

If we look at any country in the world we can see that its present state is inevitably associated with its history—and, if you please, with its history of social conditions. . . . So, it seems to me enormously important that we look to our own. . . . Today this country has more children than ever before in our history. Of our estimated 140,000,000 population in 1947, 45 millions were children under 18 years of age. That number is 11 million more than the figure for the 1940 census. Almost 4 million babies were born in 1947. We have a record number of young children. . . .

Our national administration . . . has announced . . . a program designed to find a way to strengthen the basic foundation of any free people—the home. It envisions the engaging with other nations in a

* Excerpts from a paper delivered at Southern Regional Conference, February 10, 1949.

mutually constructive program in which our technology will be assisted to invest in foreign nations. . . .

The Federal Child Welfare Program

I am disturbed, sometimes, by those who somehow see something wrong and suspicious in any program which speaks of better homes, better living conditions, better health programs and education for all our people. . . . It is a thoughtless person today who does not see that the strength of our system, which has proved itself, is that more and more of our people believe in it. The theory of *laissez faire* is as unworkable as that of the divine right of kings. . . .

We must plan to keep plenty of young people in our population, and that means an economy which will encourage marriage and children and which will see to it that the children are given opportunity to become citizens in the full meaning of the word.

We have a heavy budget because of two wars and a depression in our generation. Yet keep in mind that only about four per cent of our federal budget is concerned with social welfare and health—such as aid to the old, the blind, to dependent children, public health, vocational rehabilitation for the handicapped, and for school lunches.

Less than two per cent of the national budget represents promotion of education, housing and community facilities.

It seemed to me that those who screamed about reckless extravagance when the Truman proposals were made about improving the general welfare of our people were guilty of either thoughtlessness or hypocrisy.

We all approve the facts of preparedness costs. We hold them cheaper than war. So, none complained at those figures in the Truman proposals. . . . The whole attack was aimed at those features of the Truman proposals which were concerned with less than one fifth of one per cent which was proposed to be added to the budget for education, health and housing. It actually involved about 800 million out of 42 billion—yet it was these which drew the only attack on the budget. . . . As I have said before, it has long been apparent that our real leaders of business and industry know that our domestic economy can continue only as long as it has customers. . . .

The Value of a Welfare Program

We are rather well sold on social security measures to protect against major hazards such as death, illness, disability and unemployment.

Now, what is wrong with planning toward doing more for children and families with children? . . . I am sure that . . . children's allowances in rents, for example, or in basic foods such as milk and fresh vegetables in proportion to the number of children in a low-income family . . . are advisable and something which eventually we will do as a matter of common sense. Such a program for children would avoid higher expenditures of public money for tuberculosis hospitals, for children incapacitated by other diseases growing out of malnutrition, and for the children from broken homes which otherwise might not be broken. We always shy at the initial job and regretfully assume the heavier burden of later years. . . .

The United States is now—and was before the Second World War came—the only industrial nation in the world which did not take into account the social values of parenthood and provide some form of allowances for children in low-income families.

The Need for Community Initiative

We all are troubled by broken homes. Sermons about the problem of divorce come regularly from our pulpits, and that is proper. Yet it is not proper to ignore the economic factor in broken homes. This is something which may be proved, not guessed at.

From 1945 through our present time, more of our people have been gainfully employed than at any other time in our history. So, what do we see? The ratio between marriages and divorces is in favor of marriages. In 1945 there were 3.3 marriages for each divorce. In 1946 the ratio was 3.8 to 1 and in 1947 it was up to 4.2 marriages for each broken home.

This is true in spite of the fact that in 1948 there were an estimated 8.3 million married women in jobs as compared with 5 million in 1945. About half these women in 1948 had children under 18 and 1½ million had children under six.

The need for planning community services is obvious.

Our school situation is one we all know. Our schools are bulging at the seams and we haven't enough teachers. The Census Bureau estimates that in 1960 we will have about 7,700,000 more children in our elementary schools than we had in 1947. Estimates now are we will need about 160,000 new teachers to open the schools in 1950. What about 1960?

These community services of which I speak certainly would include maternal care and child health clinics for the low income family with children. The shocking neglect of some of our children today is one of the things which plagues the conscience of us all. Any newspaper man or woman knows the heartaches

and the shocking tragedy of abused and neglected children which are a daily portion of the newspaper report.

All these things challenge us not to have a planned economy, but to plan for care of them in our free economy, which will see that the care and development of its new customers is necessary and desirable.

I am aware of the fact that this must come out of the will of the people to do it. I can think of no finer community program than for PTA, for welfare groups, for Junior Leagues, for civic clubs to hold forums and meetings for discussion. That newspapers may assign special writers to the problem is an obvious suggestion. We have found it good for us.

An astonishing thing about us is that we rarely

know the facts of our own community. We could work a revolution if we could, in Alabama, in Georgia and all our states in the South, examine each community closely to see what it has in the way of needy and neglected children; in sick and hungry children, and in children out of school for one reason or another.

We, as a Christian people and as a nation with a Christian ideal, cannot afford to do otherwise than to plan so that marriages may mean children who will become the men and women of tomorrow—who will keep alive our legends and the best and strongest in the principle we have called "The American Dream."

RALPH MCGILL
Editor, Atlanta Constitution

DISCIPLINE

Eva Burmeister

Reprinted from Eva Burmeister, Forty-five in the Family. Copyright 1949 by Columbia University Press. This chapter is an illustration of the simple and direct way in which the whole book presents the problems and satisfactions of working with children in an institution. The chapter on "Discipline," like others in the book, should be of interest to everyone working with children in any setting.

IT is quarter past six in the morning. It is April, and the sun rose early on this day. So did Kenny, Bobbie, Marvin, and John, who sleep directly above me. They have been scurrying around barefoot for the past ten minutes. First there was a thump—that was Kenny, who gets up early to go to the bathroom. He returns and wakes the others. We try to insist that the children stay in bed until the rising bell rings, at 6:30 on school days and at 7:00 on non-school days. The Hightops' housemother cannot hear the little boys from her room as well as I, in my room directly below them. I lie still, trying to decide whether I should go up to the third floor and send the boys back to bed with a few firm words of admonition. "Oh well," I think, "it's spring and on these first few warm days they always waken earlier. Maybe they were put to bed too early last night." I decide to let them thump around until the rising bell, so long as they are not really noisy. Thus begins a typical day.

Dan goes off to school without checking out with his housemother; he wore neither coat nor cap, and left his bed unmade. Bobbie is impossible as he wipes the dishes; he flips the end of the towel at the girls, he stalls and fools around endlessly. Georgie and Eddie appropriate two bicycles and betake themselves for a spin in the neighborhood—without permission. The traffic officer comes to complain that they were on bicycles which had no licenses. Someone took the shiny identification tag from Suzy's collar; Suzy, the new dog, has strayed away and is now sitting in the Humane Society office, waiting to be called for. Bill was toss-

ing his baseball around in the bathroom and broke a window. Ellen and Susan were supposed to report to the kitchen for "working in early," but did not appear. No one could find them, and Petey became impatient because she was late with her supper schedule.

As a start on the subject of discipline (a discussion which of necessity cannot be a comprehensive one), I would like to use one of the definitions in Webster; discipline, it tells us, is "training which strengthens." Good discipline, along with strength in all the other areas of care, makes for good climate. When climate is favorable, individual children may have periods of upset, of negativistic and hostile behavior. However, the groups will, most of the time, be responsive and interested, and staff and children will be going along in the same direction, not pulling against each other. Individual children assert themselves, and we want them to; five little boys follow their frisky impulses, and we want them to; Anne argues back; Karen comes late to breakfast almost every morning—and all this is to be expected. A good climate does not mean that you have obedient, conforming children. It means that the individuals within each group are making progress toward better personal adjustment.

A strong, secure housemother, supported not only by a director who has confidence in her but also by an enlightened board, is not afraid to let her children be "naughty." They will get into mischief, they will talk back, and individually or as a group they

will be in some sort of major or minor complication almost every day. But such a housemother will probably have a fairly comfortable and relaxed group.

The size of the group has a direct bearing upon discipline. When the housemother is expected to care for too large a group, particularly of young children under fourteen, she may have to treat her youngsters *en masse*; she will not have enough time or patience for the individual, or to consider each disciplinary incident as carefully, as thoughtfully, and as thoroughly as she would if she had smaller groups. With larger groups, she may be forced to use regimentation as a means of control. And what of the little boy or girl who has to share the housemother with twenty others? Such a child will not be as contented or satisfied generally as the one who belongs to a group of eight, nine or ten children. The child who is a member of a small group will be a "better" child, needing less discipline, because his housemother has more time to devote to him as an individual; life is generally more satisfying to him. Negative behavior of a large group, about which the housemother may be concerned, or for which she may be criticized by the administrator, may be the responsibility of the administration and the board, rather than of the housemother.

While I believe in self-expression on the part of the children—verbal expression and release of feelings through activities—and in freedom to make mistakes, I do not believe in the complete absence of restraint. The children themselves realize that, in the final analysis, we, on the staff, are in control. It adds to their security to know that staff members understand and are tolerant of hostile and negative behavior but are still quite able to keep the situation well in hand. We need to be consistent and firm and to make it clear that there are certain limits. Children like to know what these limits are; in fact, they sometimes reach for them, to see just how far they can go.

For example, with a fleet of bicycles to care for and to keep in condition, certain rules are necessary. We have, on the Center grounds, a black-top surfaced playground, a gravel bicycle track, driveways, and sidewalks. One rule is that a bicycle must not be ridden up over the curb onto the sidewalk, because that would, in time, ruin the bicycle. A child knows that if he disregards a rule, he may be "off" bicycles for a day or two, or even a week. The children remind each other of the rules more often than does an adult, and that is a good sign.

If a child needs to be punished, the punishment should be directly connected with the wrongdoing. If Jim shows off by prancing out of the kitchen with

a stack of twenty-five saucers when he can manage to carry only ten, and if two of them fall off from the top and break, Petey may ask Jim to pay for the two broken ones. If Frankie flings an empty hand-lotion bottle from a third-floor window just to hear the fine loud crash below, Frankie picks up the broken pieces of glass. If Betty giggles and giggles long after the lights are out, keeping nine other girls awake, the housemother may ask Betty to come out and sit in the hall until she calms down. But, a word of caution here: Betty may be giggling just in order to be sent out into the hall. Sometimes at home the children were able to get attention only by negative behavior and the subsequent punishment. If they receive enough positive attention from us, they will be less likely to do things that get them into tight places and difficult situations.

Miss Burmeister is really telling us in this next section to bear in mind the real purpose of discipline.

A child's visits to his home are carefully planned and established by the case worker, and they are a thing apart and separate from discipline. No child should be deprived of these visits as punishment for something that has happened at the institution, nor should such visits be thought of as rewards for good behavior. A visit may be adjusted, prolonged or shortened, but on a case work basis only, depending entirely on the home situation and the child's reactions to it. These arrangements do not come within the scope of the housemother's responsibility and are never changed or withheld as a disciplinary measure. The housemother keeps the case worker informed as to the child's reactions to home visits, but this is in connection with his general adjustment.

The boys go with Roger to play basketball each Friday night. That is a hard and fast arrangement so long as their interest holds and the basketball season lasts. If a boy "fades out" on his job on Thursday, the housemother never says that he cannot play basketball on Friday. This matter of deprivation is a most ticklish one. For example, the child deprived of attending a party may be the very one who needs the values of that party. Then too, our children have already experienced so much deprivation (of emotional satisfactions) that we need always to lean toward giving rather than taking away. Deprivation, if used very carefully, can be effective, as in the case of being "off the bikes" for a period after mistreating a bicycle.

There are no pat answers, short cuts, or quick methods by means of which we can be sure of achieving good response on the part of the children. The same way of meeting a disciplinary situation may be used constructively or destructively, depending on the adult's attitude. What about devices such as charts, stars, or a demerit system? To my mind they are not really effective in teaching the child strong self-direction.

Suppose Gary anticipates a gold star at the end of a day when he is "good" and a black star when he is "naughty." Suppose, then,

he fails to make his bed before school; by nine o'clock he knows that the chance for a gold star is already missed, so he may as well make a field day of it. Karen is a little girl who would get a gold star every day of her life; she is overly conscientious, conforming, she is the first to "tell on" someone else, and she is afraid of her own shadow. She would be a much better-adjusted child, and actually a happier one, if her behavior earned her a series of dark stars!

A demerit system is a complicated one for the school-age child. A child living in a Home, a child whom we want to be relaxed and comfortable, should not have to feel that a star or a demerit will be clapped down on his record the moment he missteps. We want the child to do the acceptable thing a good part of the time because of the strength of his understanding as a result of the interpersonal relationships between him and his housemother, not because of an impersonal star. We want him to be free to be naughty, and to feel that we like him anyway. A word of direction or correction is needed here and there, but nothing so final as a tangible record of the housemother's disapproval for all to see.

The new child picks up his cues from the group and to a certain degree, at least, goes along with them. He meets and is cared for by staff members whom he does not know and whom he has not yet learned to trust. Often he has no pattern of confidence in other adults which he can transfer to these new ones. On the contrary, we start in again at the very beginning and have to wait until time and our actions and methods bring a response of confidence from the child, and this does not occur in a day or two—sometimes it takes years. This child may, however, respond fairly well to other children and he is more willing to take his direction from them at first than from the staff. If the children are interested and relaxed, and accept the idea of living in this institution, the new child is likely to absorb some of this positive response and move forward with them. This is one of the values of group living.

We sometimes see a new child watch the other children in a wary, nervous, eager (often overeager) way. The newcomer may be thrilled at the play activities offered, and at the equipment available, and in order to use them as the others do, he may want to make a place for himself with his group. At the same time, he merely tolerates his housemother at first, and he keeps his distance from the other members of the staff, except perhaps for the case worker, with whom he has begun to form a relationship. When the worker has an office in the institution where the child can see her often, he may pour out his troubles to her when he is upset; or he may come in calmly to discuss his family situation over and over again. When case work services are used in these ways, the child is likely to merge smoothly along with his group. We move very cautiously in

giving a new child correction or direction, preferring to have him pick up his own cues from the group, and we know that he can take direction from his peers much more easily than from us. It is, of course, always easier to take correction from someone you like.

No matter what happens, we should never threaten a child with removal. One of the most important things we have to give him is a place in which he knows he can stay until it is the right time for another plan to be made. If the preliminary case work study shows that this institution is the right place for this child, then we know that we must keep him. We know, too, that we may have our ups and downs, our setbacks and discouraging days, and that a readjustment takes time. If the child's behavior is a problem, he may be testing us out. If we keep him in spite of very negative behavior, he will feel more and more secure.

Often, if I have a disciplinary or authoritative session with a child, I preface our talk with, "Look, John, I want you to remember that I like you. I'm going to scold you because I don't like what you've done, or the kind of language you're using. But I like you." Children need this simple reassurance, and they need it again and again, even though their behavior of the moment is not acceptable.

A director or houseparent may fear the contagious effect of negative behavior: "If I let Betty get away with it, then they will all think they can get away with it!" Actually, it does not work that way. Children know, as the staff does, that there will be days when individuals are upset and hard to get along with. Fortunately, not everyone feels the same way on the same day, and there are usually some children in each group who keep a fairly even keel. We have found that youngsters are quite tolerant of individual differences, accepting them as we do. We try to be flexible and to be as tolerant as we can, to adapt ourselves to the children rather than expect them to conform too closely to any exacting standards or limits which we may set. There are, of course, always some children who are blunt, thoughtless and harsh to others; but I am often amazed by the amount of understanding and respect that children show toward another individual's odd ways, off moments, and bad days—if and when the staff has first shown adaptability and flexibility. After she had been with us for two years, Shirley was discussing the behavior of Georgine and Beverly. She said, "I used to do things like that, too. Georgine is really the one who started it. She is even worse than I used to be, and I was pretty awful." Shirley said this as if she understood both our worry about the incident, and also how the girls themselves felt.

The following section has wider application than the specific matter of self-government. It also says by implication that it is not wise ever to ask children to make decisions which should be made by the adults responsible for them.

Self-government is a technique used by some institutions. I believe that children should be free to express their feelings about themselves, their personal reactions, what they think of the institution and the way things are handled. It is important that they trust us to be "fair." I am always glad to talk things over with them, in a group or individually, to get their suggestions or to hear their complaints. I do question, however, the soundness of self-government when it takes the form of a board made up of

the children and one or two representatives of the staff, which meets for the purpose of deciding how to handle disciplinary problems and other matters regarding children's activities. Children, even of high school age, do not have the maturity, the judgment, or a strong enough set of values of their own to make wise decisions concerning other children, particularly if it is a matter of passing judgment on a misdemeanor and deciding on the punishment. Because of experiences previous to placement, a child may have particularly sensitive feelings or distorted opinions about a certain subject; a child on a governing board may use his powers to punish another child in a hostile way. It becomes a complicating factor in the confused feelings he may already have about people; and it may have a disturbing effect on the relationships within the group. The officers themselves may not be comfortable with their responsibilities.

There is this point, too, about a representative governing board of children from the various groups.

Larry goes to the dime store and takes a top, a nineteen-cent top. His housemother notices the new top and asks where he got it. She knows that his account is at a low ebb and that allowances are not due until tomorrow. She reminds him that he went to the dime store without asking her permission to go shopping. Larry first thinks up a few stories to get himself out of his difficulty, but finally tells the housemother that he did take the top without paying for it. The next day, after she has given out the allowances, she goes with the boy to the dime store. They pay the nineteen cents, and the housemother explains to the manager. Larry has told his friend Rudy, and the two boys and their housemother are the only ones who know. The day after the incident occurs, appropriate measures have been taken, and it is dropped. If the matter had been brought before a children's board, all the other groups would have heard about it, Larry's prestige would have been damaged and he would have harbored resentment.

In order to handle a disciplinary or behavior situation effectively, one must know the child's background and the probable reasons for his reactions and responses. Children do not, of course, have this understanding or knowledge of causative factors, and therefore should not share in the responsibility for determining disciplinary action. They might feel that certain infringements call for certain punishments, without regard to the child at fault. The professional adult considers the child first, and his adjustment next, before deciding what to do. Sometimes we, trying to be as thoughtful as we can, and calling on any skills which we may have acquired and developed, feel very uncertain about the right course of action. Sometimes we feel an overwhelming sense of responsibility, and we are constantly aware of our limitations in handling each phase of the child's twenty-four-hour day to best fit in with his needs. It is an adult responsibility and a grave one not the children's.

Group meetings can be used effectively as a means of developing a good climate—meetings of a group, a cottage or a department, together with the house-

parent or the director, or meetings of the entire institutional family and the director. We use group meetings in various ways: (1) to help a group to get ready for an occasion; (2) to explain a change that is being made in staff or program; and, (3) to talk over a troublesome situation.

Children who are uncertain, generally, and who have not had much experience in social gatherings are apt to be apprehensive and at a loss as to how to behave at a party, or an occasion at the Center, such as a tea where there may be adults whom they do not know very well. When youngsters are not sure of themselves, or of what is expected of them, they may wrestle with one another, chase, show off, act "smarty," or resist coming to the party in the first place. If the occasion is explained beforehand—timing, the program, when it will be over—they are much more apt to be poised, comfortable with themselves, and at ease.

The response of the children will also be more cordial if a group meeting is held to explain any change within the institution. Children like to be "in the know" and in the inner circle, and we are careful to present to them changes that will affect them. Sometimes they have questions and doubts which we would not have anticipated, and it is helpful to have all of them aired in the group. The process in itself seems to have value.

One of our board members was once riding in a bus that went past the Center. She was seated behind a young mother and a small boy who was a handful, evidently as much so at home as in the bus. As they approached the Center, the mother pointed to the building, saying, "That's where children stay who don't mind their mommies and daddies. There in that Home they'd make you mind!" This mother was using us (to our sorrow) as the "big bad wolf." She was expressing a traditional concept on the part of the public in regard to children's institutions, the old picture of soap, wax, complete order, and conformity.

Unfortunately some of these public concepts of children's Homes still have a basis in actual practice today. Many institutions are afraid to break away from rigid discipline and control, afraid that, given an inch, the children will take a mile. Too many children in too many institutions are expected to toe the mark to a much greater extent than are the children in the average good home, and to a much greater extent than is necessary. My final word on the subject is this: if we must lean too far one way or the other, let us lean toward spoiling the children a little, rather than toward regimentation and rigidity.

Three new pamphlets about children in nursery centers, by Doris Campbell. The New York Committee on Mental Hygiene. Price 15 cents each:

WHAT NURSERY SCHOOL IS LIKE
HOW A CHILD FEELS ABOUT ENTERING A NURSERY CENTER
THE CHILD'S FIRST DAYS IN NURSERY SCHOOL

SOME ESSENTIALS FOR INSTITUTIONS

From *Institutions for Child Care and Treatment* by MARY LOIS PYLES
Child Welfare League of America, 1947

IN ORDER to best serve the interests of the children for whom it is equipped to care, the institution has the responsibility for deciding, prior to commitment or acceptance for care, which children it should accept and under what conditions it can accept them.

INSTITUTIONAL CARE alone is not sufficient for children. Also needed in a community are family and children's casework, financial assistance, homemaker or housekeeper service, day care programs, child guidance clinics, school social work, special schools in local communities, and health services so that parents may be helped to give adequate care to children in their own homes whenever possible.

NO ONE institution can have the variety of services and skills necessary for the care of all types of children who need institutional care.

INSTITUTIONAL CARE is especially helpful to some children and unsuited to others. An institution should not accept a child only because other care is not made available for him. It is an obligation of institutions to know both the values and the limitations of their care, and the needs of children referred to them, so well that proper selection of children can be made and their care carried on as constructively as possible for each individual child.

CHILDREN who live in institutions need love, security, understanding and guidance, close personal ties with a widening circle of adults and other children, constructive learning and growth experiences, health care, education and training, recreation and social activities, spiritual values, and social and economic opportunities for mature independence and participation, just as all children do.

CASEWORK can make its best contribution when other parts of institutional care are fully developed. Some important areas for further development are those of the cottage parent and the many aspects of group care.

CASEWORKERS in an institution should be available to the individual children and to their parents from the point of intake until the children are discharged. They should also be available to other staff members for consultation and joint planning.

It is recognized that for some children, institutional care can provide certain unique values which are of more benefit to those children than any other form of foster care.

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